

# Quarterly

Issue 1 - 2007 | [vancouver.ca/SocialPlanningQuarterly](http://vancouver.ca/SocialPlanningQuarterly) | [social.planning@vancouver.ca](mailto:social.planning@vancouver.ca)



*Painting an image of diversity: the mural at Mid Main Community Health Centre.*

## Words of Welcome from Mary Clare Zak

*As the recently appointed Director of Social Planning, I am pleased to present you with our first issue of the Quarterly. The purpose of this little magazine is to feature a variety of social development initiatives that Social Planning is leading or supporting in partnership with other City departments, community-based agencies, provincial and federal governments and funding bodies. It is also intended to reflect the diverse and multifaceted nature of social development issues experienced by Vancouver's citizens and local neighbourhoods, and the activities being taken to address them.*

*Our premier production of the Quarterly features information on the City's Social Development Plan, Aboriginal services, child and youth development, urban agriculture and the efforts of South Vancouver neighbourhoods to promote multiculturalism. These topics are wide-ranging; however the theme 'integration' is the underlying thread that connects these topics together.*

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# Moving Towards Social Sustainability: Mapping the City's Social Development

Social Sustainability encompasses a range of different issues - from the provision of basic needs, to enhancing quality of life, to matters concerning equity, well-being and inclusiveness. Not surprisingly, the social sustainability dimension of municipal government extends far beyond the confines of the Social Planning department. In fact, it weaves throughout virtually every civic service. Planning for seniors' housing, facilitating public involvement, providing funding to community based organizations and ensuring adequate park space are examples of social development activities delivered by local government.

With an array of initiatives currently underway within different City departments, not to mention an increase in demand upon City resources and changing social issues, it is clear that a coordinated and strategic response to social sustainability in the city of Vancouver is required. To meet the challenge, the Community Services Group, with support from staff from the Social Planning department, is leading an inter-departmental team that is creating a Social Development Plan. The initiative links together various Community Services departments, the Vancouver Public Library, Engineering, Police, Parks Board and others.

Through a research partnership with the Vancouver Foundation, the United Way of the Lower Mainland and the Canadian Policy Research Network (CPRN) were commissioned to produce a profile of social sustainability issues in Vancouver. The collected information has assisted in identifying common themes, gaps and potential areas for collaboration with other stakeholders. As part of the same research partnership, a database of local organizations and agencies involved in social development activities was prepared by SPARC BC.

At present, an internal and external consultation process is underway. Feedback on key social development themes is being sought and this will educate the formulation of a Council report with an assessment of strategic priorities and actions. The Council report will be presented in the spring of 2007.

For more information, contact Samara Brock at ([samara.brock@vancouver.ca](mailto:samara.brock@vancouver.ca)) or Mario Lee ([mario.lee@vancouver.ca](mailto:mario.lee@vancouver.ca)).

## Directory of Aboriginal Communities & Services

Former Aboriginal Social Planner (and the new Executive Director of the Urban Native Youth Association) Lynda Gray has developed a resource that provides a broad overview of the activities and stakeholders within Vancouver's Aboriginal communities. While the resource is intended to help city staff to gain a better understanding of Vancouver's Aboriginal communities and to provide ideas on how to go about support emerging initiatives and priorities, it may also be helpful to our external stakeholders.

The resource covers twenty-three subject areas ranging from the significance of Elders to education, employment, health, and youth. Each subject includes background knowledge, a listing of who's involved, key partnerships, committees, trends, and service gaps. Also included is a contact list of Aboriginal organizations in Vancouver. An on-line version of the resource can also be found on our Social Planning website at [www.vancouver.ca/aboriginal](http://www.vancouver.ca/aboriginal).

# Building Partnerships for Child Development

By Lynne Swanick, Childcare Social Planner



A successful Child Development strategy depends on linking the efforts of a variety of stakeholders – all of whom collaborate to provide quality services and activities, both to the 0-5 population and those who push the swings as well!

Through the MOU, a Steering Committee of senior staff has been created to identify and guide opportunities. Members include Chris Kelly and Valerie Overgaard, Vancouver School Board; Barbara Stackhouse and Dr. Cheryl Anderson, Vancouver Coastal Health; Beverly Dicks, Ministry of Children and Family Development; Paul Whitney, Vancouver Public Library; and Carol Ann Young, City of Vancouver.

The supports included within Early Childhood Development, Learning and Care include, but are not limited to, kindergarten, licensed and regulated childcare (including preschool), parenting/caregiver and family support programs (including family literacy), recreational programs and services for children with additional support needs.

This is an exciting milestone in the continued development of collaborative efforts to address the needs of children and their families in Vancouver.

If you have any questions on the MOU, please contact Carol Ann Young, Senior Child Development Planner, at 604-871-6042

*For more information, see the Child Development webpage at [www.vancouver.ca/childcare](http://www.vancouver.ca/childcare)*

The City of Vancouver Children's Policy states "that children are our most important resource and represent our hope for the future". Since the early 1990s, the City of Vancouver has developed a strong and innovative policy base to embrace this vision.

Most recently, the City Manager and CEOs from a number of other public agencies that have a mandate to support children and families, took another step in this direction by signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), entitled, "Advancing an Integrated Neighbourhood System of Early Childhood Development, Learning and Care Services in Vancouver." By working collaboratively, the MOU will support and foster opportunities to work collectively in the best interests of young children and families in Vancouver.

## What the new MOU will do

This Memorandum of Understanding commits the City and its public partners to assist with:

- Planning, priority setting and development
- Administration and financial management
- Community collaboration and networking
- Program consultation
- Service integration
- Capacity building

# *Moving Towards Social Sustainability:*

# **Mapping the City's Social Development**

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# Youth: The kids are all right.



If one thing can be said of the Social Planning Department's Youth Outreach Team, it's this: they represent large! Along with covering a lot of ground with recent projects, they have an exciting roster of activities lined up just around the corner. Whether it's working to develop the capacity of youth-serving organizations across the city, facilitating youth-engagement within the

City structure, connecting with schools and community groups, or working one-on-one with youth and linking them into civic processes... the Youth Outreach Team doesn't stop. Think of them as a team of civic engagement-loving superheroes.

Here are a couple of projects of note:

## Looking Forward:

*COV Youth Awards (May 4, 2007):* Planning is already underway for this year's COV Youth Awards which will be held at the Italian Cultural Centre on May 4, 2007. Now in its third year, the event is a jam packed awards night celebrating the contributions of young people, adult allies that work with youth, and groups and organizations supporting young people in community building. This year there will be two special awards sponsored by the City's Office of Sustainability: One Day Award for Leadership on Climate Change and Energy Consumption (individual and organizational categories). The event is being co-planned with the Office of Sustainability and youth are already signed up and engaged through various working groups. The evening will include art, fashion, music... but most importantly will feature youth who are creating positive change in our communities.

## Looking Back:

*Youth Worker's Jam:* Last fall the Roundhouse Community Centre was filled with youth workers, aspiring youth workers and community service agencies networking at a free full day event. The day's events included a mapping session, communications workshop, inspiring speaker Tawx'sin yexwulla - Aaron Nelson-Moody - a Squamish artist and cultural worker, and an open space dialogue session aimed at identifying common areas of work. The event was hosted by the Youth Outreach Team in collaboration with the Kinex Youth Project of the Self Help Resource Association, S.U.C.C.E.S.S., YouthCO Aids Society, the Environmental Youth Alliance and community developer Sara Kendal. The event was a great success and additional "jams" are currently in the works.

For more information on the COV Youth Awards, contact Lanny Jimenez ([lanny.jimenez@vancouver.ca](mailto:lanny.jimenez@vancouver.ca)). For details on the Youth Workers Jam contact Julianna Torjek ([julianna.torjek@vancouver.ca](mailto:julianna.torjek@vancouver.ca)). Deets on YouthPolitik are best found with Anka Raskin ([anka.raskin@vancouver.ca](mailto:anka.raskin@vancouver.ca)). For other details zip over to [vancouveryouth.ca](http://vancouveryouth.ca) or [vancouver.ca/youth](http://vancouver.ca/youth).

## YouthPolitik: In da house!

YouthPolitik is a new initiative of the Mayor's Office, designed in partnership with the City of Vancouver, Park Board, School Board, Library and youth community, for Vancouver youth ages 14-19 living in Vancouver. The goals of the program are to increase awareness of civic issues and create additional opportunities to meaningfully involve Vancouver youth in municipal government.

More than 75 young people signed up for the pilot program in October 2006. Over a one-month period participants were immersed in an intense series of fun events, workshops and skills-building activities, many of which had frighteningly catchy names like "Citylicious" and "Political Speed Dating." The program concluded in a City Youth Council-type session the last week of November 2006. Youth were matched with elected officials, learned about Council processes, debated topics of interest, and planned actions they could undertake. Eight themes were the focus of discussion and debate. They included: 1) child and youth rights; 2) alternative arts, culture and recreation activities for youth; 3) environment and sustainable transportation; 4) accessibility of libraries and schools; 5) housing and homelessness; 6) youth engagement; 7) violence and racism; and 8) substance abuse.

2006 YouthPolitik participants have now formed an alumni group and will take part in the planning of the program for 2007.

:: Get the Word. And a few cool pix too ::  
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# Food Policy Focus Grows Success

For the past few years the City of Vancouver has been nurturing the development of a Food Policy program that is now emerging as one of the most innovative municipal undertakings of its kind in North America. Housed in Social Planning, the Food Policy team works to promote food security for the city's residents, and advance the goals of a just and sustainable food system for all.

The Food Policy team works with the Vancouver Food Policy Council (VFPC) to advance these objectives. The two are engaged in a variety of activities, including: the development of an ambitious community gardens project (2,010 new plots by 2010), the development of urban agriculture guidelines (see article overleaf) that also include provisions for edible landscaping, and urban bee keeping. Most recently, the VFPC won unanimous support from City Council for their work on the Vancouver Food Charter - a document that lays out a series of principles linking food security to community economic development, ecological health, social justice, collaboration and participation (citizen and community engagement), and celebration... because of the role that food plays in bringing people together for celebration and sharing. There will be more on this important initiative in the next edition of the *Quarterly*.

For the moment we would be remiss if we didn't report out on another important item that took place last fall when the Social Planning department and the Food Policy Council played host to the joint Community Food Security Coalition (CFSC) and Food Secure Canada (FSC) conference - an international gathering on food security issues.

It was an excellent gathering, and Social Planning was proud to play a part in organizing the event. Dozens of workshops and plenary discussions explored issues connected with food security - everything from urban farming to community gardens, to biotechnology to emergency food providers. Workshop attendees were also able to take tours of some of the city's food hotspots: its great community gardens (now growing in number thanks to the 2010 Community Garden initiative), as well as key sites like the Trout Lake Farmers Market and Granville Island.

According to Devorah Kahn, Food Policy Coordinator, the challenge now is to keep the momentum of the conference going. "People always get such a charge out of these events... speaking with likeminded people and learning from others' experiences. The critical thing is to figure out the best way to take this learning and incorporate the best aspects into our own work." The momentum would still seem to be there. The conference, says Kahn, continues to be talked about among food groups around the city. All of which speaks to the important role of the Food Policy Council. The Council - which was listed as the "local host" of the conference - is a natural forum for building on the many ideas that were gleaned and figuring out how to translate them into action. "This is the group," says Kahn, "that will help to translate the energy and ideas that came out of the conference into doable activities for the City." After all, its not enough to just plant an idea... you have to nurture its growth so that it can jump from field to table.



Top: Wayne Roberts and Ellen Desjardins (Toronto Food Policy Council) field questions between sessions. Bottom: Terra Kaehler and Dr. Wendy Mordes discuss Vancouver's Urban Agriculture inventory project.

# Urban Agriculture – Turning a new leaf in urban planning

No, we're not talking Massey Ferguson or John Deere (or whatever your favourite farm tractor is), or even amber waves of grain. "Urban ag" is a serious, yet fun, tool for achieving food security, health, and friendlier neighbourhoods to name just a few of the benefits.

Urban agriculture is an umbrella term that refers to food growing and related activities within or surrounding cities. It includes community and backyard food gardens, edible landscaping such as herbs, berry bushes and fruit trees, food producing rooftops and balconies, farmers markets, hobby beekeeping, and food composting.

City Council has supported urban agriculture by creating the Food Policy Coordinator staff position in Social Planning, and by setting a target of creating 2,010 new food garden plots in shared gardens by 2010 as part of the Winter Games legacy. Council also approved a range of conditions related to "urban ag" as part of the rezoning of South East False Creek.

As a result of this commitment, expect to see a greener, more sustainable City where community and other shared gardens bring people together in a fun activity that promotes community building, crime reduction, exercise and improved nutrition.

For more information on the City's approach to food policy, or on the Vancouver Food Policy Council, see [www.vancouver.ca/foodpolicy](http://www.vancouver.ca/foodpolicy) or contact Devorah Kahn at [devorah.kahn@vancouver.ca](mailto:devorah.kahn@vancouver.ca). For information on the development of urban agriculture guidelines contact Vickie Morris ([vickie.morris@vancouver.ca](mailto:vickie.morris@vancouver.ca)).

## :: Current Projects ::

We couldn't include everything that we've been doing into these eight pages... so here's a short list of two other items that might be of interest. Details on these and other items can be found on the Social Planning web-pages: [vancouver.ca/socialplanning](http://vancouver.ca/socialplanning).

**Special Needs Residential Facilities: A Review of Complaints.** SNRFs are a frequent target of NIMBYism, but are the complaints justified? This study reviews the formal complaints that have been registered against SNRFs of all types across Vancouver for the last few decades. The net result? A lot of success stories, and next to no substantial issues. To view the report visit [www.vancouver.ca/snrf](http://www.vancouver.ca/snrf).

**Social Infrastructure Project:** In the past, urban planning focused on roads, utilities, and urban design/architecture – called "infrastructure" by engineers and planners. Vancouver and other cities are beginning to recognize that cities' social environments are as important to their success as their physical environments. The Social Planning Department, in consultation with other City departments, and with the City's various population advisory committees, has drafted a set of principles aimed at guiding City decisions on resource allocation, location, and permitting facilities (places) that support social development. For more information, contact Vickie Morris at [vickie.morris@vancouver.ca](mailto:vickie.morris@vancouver.ca)



With Urban Agriculture guidelines new developments will be encouraged to plan for food-growing spaces.

# Creating a Safe Harbour in South Vancouver

By Baldwin Wong, Multicultural Social Planner



Safe Harbour is a provincially-funded neighbourhood-based multiculturalism/anti-racism project. While first initiated in 2004 by the Nanaimo Action for Diversity Team, it has made its way across the waters to Vancouver, and more specifically, to South Vancouver.

The overall purpose of the Safe Harbour initiative is for local areas to collectively address issues of racism, discrimination or harassment.

Safe Harbour locations, which can be a local storefront business or a community service agency, serve as sanctuaries for people who experience discrimination or harassment and briefly need a safe place to go to. Agencies and businesses receive orientation and training about the program and identify their commitment by putting up a Safe Harbour sticker on the window.

The Affiliation of Multicultural Societies and Service Agencies of BC (AMSSA) received provincial funding to pilot Safe Harbour in 12 communities in BC in 2006, and Social Planning staff participated on the Project Advisory Committee. In Vancouver, South Vancouver Neighbourhood House (SVNH) was identified as the lead agency to launch the project in the South Vancouver neighbourhood.

South Vancouver business and service agency representatives attended Safe Harbour training at the Neighbourhood House in March 2006. Neighbourhood House and Social Planning staff later invited the City's Hastings Institute to provide a second phase of training emphasizing diversity-related issues. The two-day session was successful in attracting the support and participation of local business groups including the Business Improvement Association, and a range of community service organizations. A UBC research student helped document the entire process with the intent of sharing the learning with other communities.

One participant commented: "it feels good to be a part of developing a nicer neighbourhood;" another remarked that "I appreciated meeting other community members and hearing their concerns and working out solutions together."

At the end of the training session, participants agreed to meet again to further discuss issues of concern to the local community. Safe Harbour, it would seem, has also become a catalyst in promoting networking and mutual support among agencies at the neighbourhood level in response to pressing local issues. Karen Larcombe, Executive Director of the Neighbourhood House, felt that "Safe Harbour training has opened the door for our local businesses and service agencies to work together to help people affected by discrimination." SVNH will continue to support Safe Harbour through organizing follow-up community meetings in the future.

For those who are interested to learn more about the South Vancouver Safe Harbour project, please contact Karen Larcombe at South Vancouver Neighbourhood House, 604-324-6212, or Baldwin Wong, Social Planning, 604-871-6637.

## Latest Social Planning Resources

In addition to the work that Social Planning has been doing, a number of agencies and organizations throughout the city have been busy releasing research studies of their own. These resources contribute to a more complete understanding of the social conditions in Vancouver, and the issues faced by residents of the city.

**Vital Signs Vancouver** – Commissioned by the Vancouver Foundation, the local Vital Signs report builds on a successful community indicators formula that has been employed in Toronto >> [www.vancouverfoundation.bc.ca/VitalSigns/index.html](http://www.vancouverfoundation.bc.ca/VitalSigns/index.html).

**Social Sustainability in Vancouver** – Produced by the Canadian Social Policy Research Network (CSPRN) for the Social Planning Department. >> [www.vancouver.ca/commsvcs/socialplanning/initiatives/socssust/pdf/cprn06sep.pdf](http://www.vancouver.ca/commsvcs/socialplanning/initiatives/socssust/pdf/cprn06sep.pdf).

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The Social Planning Quarterly is produced by the Social Planning Department, City of Vancouver.

**Editor:** Andrew Pask

**Editorial Team:** Anne Kloppenborg, Vickie Morris, Lynne Swanick, Julianna (JT) Torjek, Mary Clare Zak

**Mail:** Social Planning Department, 453 West 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Vancouver, BC, V5Y 1V4

**Email:** [social.planning@vancouver.ca](mailto:social.planning@vancouver.ca)

**Web:** [vancouver.ca/SocialPlanningQuarterly](http://vancouver.ca/SocialPlanningQuarterly)

**Contributions are welcome!** The next edition of the Quarterly will be coming out in Summer '07.

Average monthly cost of healthy food for a single parent with two children (2006 BC Cost of Eating Report). \$477

Average cost of an unfurnished 1 bdrm rental in Vancouver on Sat. March 17, 2007 (according to Vancouver Sun & Craigslist). \$937

Percentage increase in Vancouver homeless living on the street and shelters between 2002 and 2005 (GVRD). 63%

## A Word from Mary Clare Zak, (continued from the front cover)



*Integration is a term often used to describe the concept of the 'two way street' required on the part of immigrants and refugees, as well as host communities, to ensure that newcomers successfully settle and can meaningfully contribute to the social, cultural and economic fabric of host communities. This 'two way street' requires adjustments not only on the part of new arrivals but by the entire community, in recognition of the principles of human rights, the advancement of social cohesion, and the realization of the innate potential of all our citizens.*

*Baldwin Wong's article on the Safe Harbour Project in South Vancouver is an obvious example of this type of work in action. In addition, the City's effort to create a Social*

*Development Plan over the next several months provides considerable opportunities for City departments and the community to work in a more integrated fashion, building on the collective knowledge of what works and what the needs are, to identify key priorities, actions and new ways of doing things. All of us at Social Planning are proud to be playing a leadership role in its progress and we appreciate and encourage your involvement in the plan's development.*

*The generous welcome I have received since arriving at the City is very much appreciated. The past few months in my new role have been both challenging and rewarding. I look forward to more issues of the Quarterly and to continuing work with all of you in the years ahead.*

## Social Statistics A Compendium of Figures: Cost of Living

Average monthly cost of healthy food for a single parent with two children (2006 BC Cost of Eating Report).	\$477
Median cost of licensed childcare for toddlers in Vancouver (18 mos.- 3 yrs) (2006) (Westcoast Children's Resource).	\$800
Average cost of an unfurnished 1 bdrm rental in Vancouver on Sat. March 17, 2007 (according to Vancouver Sun & Craigslist).	\$937
2007 Provincial income assistance rates, for a single parent with 2 children (Government of BC).	\$1,036
Percentage increase in Vancouver homeless living on the street and shelters between 2002 and 2005 (GVRD).	63%
Rank of Vancouver on index of "world's most liveable cities" (W.H. Mercer Report, 2007).	3

City of Vancouver | Social Planning

## Quarterly

The Social Planning Quarterly is produced by the Social Planning Department, City of Vancouver.

**Editor:** Andrew Pask

**Editorial Team:** Anne Kloppenborg, Vickie Morris, Lynne Swanick, Julianna (JT) Torjek, Mary Clare Zak

**Mail:** Social Planning Department, 453 West 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Vancouver, BC, V5Y 1V4

**Email:** [social.planning@vancouver.ca](mailto:social.planning@vancouver.ca)

**Web:** [vancouver.ca/SocialPlanningQuarterly](http://vancouver.ca/SocialPlanningQuarterly)

**Contributions are welcome!** The next edition of the Quarterly will be coming out in Summer '07.

### A Word from Mary Clare Zak, (continued from the front cover)



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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mary Clare Zak".

Next issue: Updates on the Social Development plan, Food Charter, Collaboration with the Centre of Excellence for Youth Engagement, 2007 CoV Youth Awards and other topical pieces.